for a playhouse when she was a child, that it was in former years a place where Indians met and gambled; and that they, perhaps, built fires there, causing its charred condition. As late as ten years ago, the entrance to the hollow was still large enough to admit a small person. At the present time the bark has so nearly covered the cavity that it is impossible for one to insert the hand, where once a man could enter.

The reason that this great tree has been so long unknown to the general public lies in the fact that it stands in the grounds of a private residence (at 624 Lewelling Road, formerly called Main Street) and its trunk cannot be seen from the main road. The crown can be seen for a considerable distance; but there are other trees in the immediate vicinity, and the laurel attracts no attention until one has entered the yard in which it stands, and is in view of its great trunk. The house beneath the tree was built in 1864.

Oakland, July 15, 1931

A VARIANT OF THE COAST LIVE OAK

John Thomas Howell

An Old Name Reconsidered. In the late autumn of 1851 the members of the Sitgreaves exploring expedition to southwestern United States crossed the Salton Sink of the Colorado Desert on their route to San Diego and the Pacific, and, passing beyond San Felipe, ascended the western mountains. The summits of these, according to Dr. S. W. Woodhouse, surgeon and naturalist to the expedition, were covered with tall pines, and on the dividing ridge was found and collected a species of live-oak (Report of an Expedition down the Zuñi and Colorado Rivers, 40,——1853). Together with the other botanical collections, specimens of this oak passed to Dr. John Torrey for study and in his report on the botany of the expedition he described as new this tree from Santa Ysabel and named it Quercus oxyadenia (loc. cit., 172, pl. 17). And thus it was that that form of Q. agrifolia inhabiting the higher slopes and canyons of eastern San Diego Co. became known in botany; but ever since its first publication the name has never been used and it has long been relegated to synonymy under Q. agrifolia.

Although Q. oxyadenia is probably too near Q. agrifolia to be tenable as a species, the Torrey oak has been noted on several occasions in the field as a well marked form deserving at least varietal recognition. The shape and size of leaves and acorns, which were the distinguishing characters according to Torrey, fall well within the specific bounds of variation in Q. agrifolia, but the dense and persistent pubescence which entirely covers the lower side of leaves, petioles, and branchlets is not found in any other form of that species. Because of the distinctive nature of this character and its variance from the normal type, the Torrey oak is here designated **Q. agrifolia** var. **oxyadenia** (Torr.) J. T. Howell, comb. nov.

This variety is typically developed in the high valleys and canyon

bottoms of the mountains on the western edge of the Colorado Desert ranging from the San Jacinto Mts. in Riverside Co., California, southward through San Diego Co. to the mountains of northern Lower California. The pubescence which marks this variant is stellate in character (as is usual in the genus) and forms a felt-like covering on branchlets, petioles, and lower sides of leaves. This dense and uniform pubescence is remarkably persistent, for leaves three years old are frequently as densely hairy beneath as the lower surfaces of leaves of the current season. Along the western bounds of its distribution intergrades are to be found between var. oxyadenia and the type of Q. agrifolia with glabrous or very sparsely stellate-pubescent leaves which is common in the lower hills and valleys of southern California. These intermediates are marked by noticeably stellate-pubescent leaves and branchlets but the hairs are neither so numerous nor so persistent as in var. oxyadenia. Thus on hillsides at the Henshaw Dam on the San Luis Rey River typical specimens of var. oxyadenia were collected (J. T. Howell no. 4844), in the canyon of the San Luis Rey 6 miles west of Henshaw Dam (J. T. Howell no. 4853) a specimen intermediate in character was collected, while at Pala Summit still further west the form of Q. agrifolia usual at low altitudes in southern California was seen. Other collections are: "mountains between El Centro and San Diego", E. A. Zemcuznikov in 1929; dry valley bottom, 12 miles south of Warner's Hot Springs, San Diego Co., J. T. Howell no. 3264; common along washes, Vandeventer Flat, San Jacinto Mts., Riverside Co., Munz no. 5955 (Herb. Univ. Calif.); Santa Cruz Creek, Lower California, T. S. Brandegee in 1893 (at least as to branchlet just below the sheet-number 119133, Herb. Univ. Calif.); 15 to 20 miles east of Ensenada on road to Ojos Negros, Lower California, Wiggins and Gillespie no. 4053 (intergrade to Q. agrifolia, Herb. Calif. Acad. Sci.)[1].

THE ANNUAL DINNER FOR 1931

The annual dinner meeting of the California Botanical Society was held in the Rockefeller International House, University of California, Berkeley, on the evening of March 7, 1931. Doctor George J. Peirce of Stanford University, President of the Society, presided as toastmaster. During the course of the dinner musical numbers were presented under the direction of Mr. W. W. Carruth. A notice of the life and work of Dr. P. B. Kennedy, a former president of the Society, written by Dr. W. L. Jepson, was read in Dr. Jepson's absence by Dr. Peirce. There was also read by Professor H. E. McMinn an interesting excerpt from one of Mrs. Ynes Mexia's letters written while botanizing in the tropical forests of Brazil. Following the dinner, Dr. Carlton R. Ball, gave the principal address of the evening on "Some Interesting Facts about Willows." In connection

[1] Unless otherwise noted, the specimens cited are in the herbarium of the California Academy of Sciences.